

## “This I Believe” Essay Rubric

|   | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Thesis/Focus</b>   | Belief statement is not evident.   | Multiple beliefs are listed with little development.   | Core belief is clearly stated with evidence of development.  | One core belief is explicit and developed throughout essay.   |
| <b>Purpose</b>  | Tells a story that is not connected to the belief or does not tell a story.  | Tells a story that is somewhat connected to the belief, but is difficult to follow.  | Tells a story that is connected to the belief.   | Tells a story that is grounded in the events of everyday life; links to the essence of daily life philosophy and to the shaping of personal beliefs.  |
| <b>Organization/Transition</b>  | Demonstrates limited or no organization; does not stay on topic; limited or no transitional devices.   | Demonstrates ineffective organization; attempts to refer to a single topic; transitional devices are limited.  | Demonstrates organization; maintains focus throughout; uses a variety of transitional devices.   | Demonstrates unique or effective organization; maintains focus throughout; uses a variety of transitional devices uniquely/effectively.   |
| <b>Details/Elaboration</b>  | Lacks details for the belief or details do not enhance the belief.   | Limited use of details; details tell rather than show.   | Effective use of relevant details support the belief; details mostly show rather than tell   | Unique, rich, insightful, and effective use of details to support belief; details effectively show rather than tell.  |
| <b>Writer’s Craft</b><br>• <b>Vocabulary</b><br>• <b>Voice</b><br>• <b>Tone</b><br>• <b>Style</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak vocabulary; word choice interferes with meaning.</li> <li>• Lacks writer's voice.</li> <li>• Tone is unclear or negative.</li> <li>• Limited or no use of sentence variety.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic or limited vocabulary; some incorrect word choice.</li> <li>• Emerging sense of voice.</li> <li>• Tone preaches or judges.</li> <li>• Ineffective use of sentence variety.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently varied and effective use of vocabulary; clear and appropriate word choice.</li> <li>• Strong sense of voice.</li> <li>• Tone is mostly personal and positive.</li> <li>• Effective use of sentence variety.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rich vocabulary, vivid language; sophisticated word choice.</li> <li>• Powerful sense of voice throughout piece, appropriate for purpose.</li> <li>• Tone is consistently personal and positive.</li> <li>• Effective use of sentence variety to enhance voice and meaning.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Mechanics</b>  | Errors seriously interfere with meaning.   | Many errors that sometimes interfere with meaning.   | Some errors that do not seriously interfere with meaning.  | Few errors that do not interfere with meaning.  |